

and of The United States of America
the weasles play golden harps
gunfire goes through thin doors
bathtubs spit up turds
and at the county fair
you can get a 3 foot stuffed dog
with plastic brown eyes
for 10¢ if you can throw
the ring over the prong.
and the weather has been good lately
a little bit dry
and when you get your things from the laundry
the buttons are missing
and on the freeways
automobiles blow up, burn
backing up traffic for 15 miles
everybody sitting there
listening to the same radio station.

it is a wonder we have come this far.
our dumb courage is
limitless

drinking a coffee at McDonald's
out of a paper cup
is almost more victory than we can
hope for.

TRAIN STATION

the German drunks at the train station in Mannheim
stand at tiny round tables and drink their beer and
wait. their faces are red and they look tired but
they aren't like American drunks, American beer-
drinkers. they are quiet in the train station at
Mannheim. the Germans have lost two wars since
1914; maybe it was getting bombed like that ...
but their reserve and restraint, their delicate
need ... not to be particularly noticed, it refreshes
me -- such a tolerant indifference.

watching the beer drinkers in that train station in
Mannheim ... is to see what you believe in
made public and good: standing within a history
and a life, they indicate that it might be terrible
at times and at other times, possibly fair -- but
nothing to act up about:

the beer is all right and the train will arrive.